GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1099
ANSWERED ON:01.03.2006
DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN RURAL AREAS
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Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) the priorities fixed by the Planning Commission for the development of infrastructure in the rural areas of the country;

(b) whether the Commission exercises its control over the programmes being run for this purpose;

(c) if so, the reasons for poor condition of water supply, electricity, education, healthcare and roads, particularly in the rural areas; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Union Government to improve the situation?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN)

(a), (b) &(d) : The Finance Minister in his Budget Speech 2005-06 had announced Bharat Nirman, a four-year business plan for building rural India. The six components prioritized under the Bharat Nirman programme are irrigation, road, housing, water supply, electrification and telephone connectivity. The agenda for Bharat Nirman include ongoing programmes and up scaling of some of the ongoing programmes to make the programme time bound, transparent and accountable. The Committee on Rural Infrastructure chaired by the Prime Minister (in which the Deputy Chairman Planning Commission is the Member - Convener) in its two meetings had identified physical targets to be achieved under each of the components during the four-year period of 2005-2009. The Committee is also monitoring Bharat Nirman progremme with the view to identify and remove the bottlenecks in achieving the targets. The education and health care in rural areas are addressed through other specific programmes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and National Rural Health Mission (NRHM). The various programmes covered under Bharat Nirman and the SSA & NRHM are being reviewed by the Planning Commission in the Half Yearly Performance Review meetings of the respective Ministries/Departments and also with State Governments.

(c): The status of amenities in the rural areas are

(i) Water Supply: Out of the total 14.22 lakh habitations in the country, 96% have been fully covered so far with water supply at a norm of 40 litres per capita per day.

(ii) Electricity: Out of the 5,87,556 villages as per 1991 census, around 1,25,000 villages have no access to electricity. 10346 villages are targeted for coverage in 2005-06.

(iii) Education: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has targeted to cover about 20 crore children. SSA has been strengthened and combined with a programme for universalisation of the Mid-day Meal programme, which now covers 12 crore children.

(iv) Healthcare: The seven year National Rural Health Mission launched throughout the country in April 2005, envisages integrated comprehensive healthcare services to improve the access to equitable, affordable, accountable and effective primary health care to rural people especially poor women and children.

(v) Roads: Out of the total of 8,49,341 habitations identified for road connectivity, 3,30,647 habitations are so far unconnected. These habitations have a population range of 1000+ to up to 250. Under Bharat Nirman all villages with a population of 1000+(500 in hilly/tribal areas) are to be provided with a road. A total of 66802 habitations will be covered under Bharat Nirman.

Hence the condition of rural infrastructure/amenities cannot be termed as poor.